

1  
2  
3  
4 UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
5 DISTRICT OF NEVADA

6 \* \* \*

7 DEUTSCHE BANK NATIONAL TRUST  
8 COMPANY,

9 Plaintiff,

10 v.

11 SFR INVESTMENTS POOL 1, LLC, et al.,

12 Defendants.

Case No. 2:17-cv-00457-KJD-GWF

**ORDER**

13 Presently before the Court is Plaintiff's Motion for Summary Judgment (#42). Defendants  
14 filed responses (##45, 51) to which Plaintiff replied (##54, 55). Also before the Court is Defendant  
15 Northbrook Homeowners Association Inc.'s Motion for Summary Judgment (#43). Plaintiff and  
16 Defendant SFR Investments Pool 1 filed responses (##50, 52) to which Defendant Northbrook  
17 Homeowners Association Inc. replied (##56, 57). Also before the Court is Defendant SFR  
18 Investments Pool 1, LLC's Motion for Summary Judgment (#44). Plaintiff filed a response (#49)  
19 to which SFR Investments Pool 1, LLC replied (#53).

20 **I. Background**

21 This case emerges from the non-judicial foreclosure sale on or about August 7, 2014 of  
22 the property located at 4401 Sparkle Crest Avenue, Las Vegas, Nevada 89031 ("Property"). This  
23 case shares a similar fact pattern with many cases currently pending before this Court, all having  
24 to do with HOA foreclosure sales. The several motions presently pending before the Court center  
25 in whole or in part around the question of what notice of default the foreclosing party was  
26 required to provide Plaintiff prior to its foreclosure sale on the Property. After the Nevada  
27 Supreme Court's decision in SFR Investments Pool 1 LLC v. U.S. Bank, the Ninth Circuit  
28 decided Bourne Valley Court Trust v. Wells Fargo Bank, NA, 832 F.3d 1154, 1160 (9th Cir.

1 2016), holding NRS 115.3116(2)'s statutory notice scheme was facially unconstitutional. In light  
2 of Bourne Valley, what notice an HOA must provide prior to foreclosing on a superpriority lien  
3 remains uncertain.

## 4 **II. Analysis**

### 5 **A. Certified Question**

6 On April 21, 2017, in Bank of New York Mellon v. Star Hills Homeowners Association,  
7 this Court certified the following question to the Nevada Supreme Court: "Whether NRS §  
8 116.31168(1)'s incorporation of NRS § 107.090 requires homeowners associations to provide  
9 notices of default to banks even when a bank does not request notice?" Bank of New York  
10 Mellon v. Star Hill Homeowners Assoc., 2017 WL 1439671, at \*5 (D. Nev. April 21, 2017).

11 In granting certification, the Court reasoned the following: In Bourne Valley, the Ninth  
12 Circuit definitively answered the question that the statute's "opt-in" framework was  
13 unconstitutional. Bourne Valley Court Trust v. Wells Fargo Bank, NA, 832 F.3d 1154, 1160 (9th  
14 Cir. 2016). However, that leaves this Court with the unresolved question of what notice must be  
15 provided. "It is solely within the province of the state courts to authoritatively construe state  
16 legislation." Cal. Teachers Ass'n v. State Bd. of Educ., 271 F.3d 1141, 1146 (9th Cir. 2001). As  
17 such, state law questions of first impression like this one should be resolved by the state's  
18 highest court. See Huddleston v. Dwyer, 322 U.S. 232, 237 (1944). Allowing the Nevada  
19 Supreme Court to answer this question before considering any other motions will provide this  
20 Court the necessary guidance as to how to handle the issues of notice and actual notice in light of  
21 Bourne Valley.

22 In Bank of New York Mellon, the Court did not and could not rely upon any controlling  
23 state law as to the requirements of notice. This Court faces the same predicament here. An  
24 answer to the above already certified question will provide much needed clarity, and may be  
25 dispositive of many of the issues currently before the Court in this case.

### 26 **B. Stay of the Case**

27 The pending motions in this case implicate the previously certified question regarding  
28 what notice state law requires. To save the parties from the need to invest further resources into

1 the issues surrounding the notice requirement, the Court *sua sponte* stays all proceedings in this  
2 case and denies all pending motions without prejudice.

3 A district court has the inherent power to stay cases to control its docket and promote the  
4 efficient use of judicial resources. Landis v. North Am. Co., 299 U.S., 248, 254-55 (1936);  
5 Dependable Highway Exp., Inc. v. Navigators Ins. Co., 498 F.3d 1059, 1066 (9th Cir. 200).  
6 When determining whether a stay is appropriate pending the resolution of another case—often  
7 called a “Landis stay”—the district court must weigh: (1) the possible damage that may result  
8 from a stay; (2) any “hardship or inequity” that a party may suffer if required to go forward; and  
9 (3) “the orderly course of justice measured in terms of the simplifying or complicating of issues,  
10 proof, and question of law” that a stay will engender. Lockyer v. Mirant Corp., 398 F.3d 1098,  
11 1110 (9th Cir. 2005). Weighing these considerations, the Court finds that a Landis stay is  
12 appropriate.

### 13 *1. Damage from a stay*

14 The only potential damage that may result from a stay is that the parties will have  
15 to wait longer for resolution of this case and any motions that they have filed or intend to file in  
16 the future. But a delay would also result from any rebriefing or supplemental briefing that may  
17 be necessitated pending the Nevada Supreme Court’s answer to the certified question. It is not  
18 clear that a stay will ultimately lengthen the life of this case.

19 Additionally, a stay of this case pending resolution of the certified question is  
20 expected to be reasonably short. This Court certified the question approximately nine months  
21 ago, and briefing on the pending petition in Nevada’s Supreme Court is completed. Because the  
22 length of this stay is directly tied to the petition proceedings in that case, it is reasonably brief,  
23 and not indefinite. Thus, the Court finds only minimal possible damage that this stay may cause.

### 24 *2. Hardship and inequity*

25 Both parties equally face hardship or inequity if the Court resolves the claims or  
26 issues before the certified question has been resolved. And in the interim, both parties stand to  
27 benefit from a stay, regardless of the outcome of the question. A stay will prevent any additional,  
28 unnecessary briefing and premature expenditures of time, attorney’s fees, and resources.

